7. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section summarizes the overall results of the Project EASI/ED cost/benefit analysis.

Using the cost data that was provided by ED staff, cost/benefit analysts allocated costs across the 22 functions of the current systems and Project EASI/ED as explained in Section 4. Each function was compared for the current system and for Project EASI/ED, and any cash savings were noted. For the most part, current systems costs were higher than Project EASI/ED costs for both life-cycle costs and net present value. Project EASI/ED has a NPV of $1,492,104,772 where the current systems' NPV is $2,364,703,704. Project EASI/ED shows a 36.9% reduction in NPV, with an estimated NPV cost savings of $843,892,034. For operational life-cycle costs, Project EASI/ED shows $2,567,382,109 compared to current systems' costs of $3,928,136,066, a reduction of 34.6%.

Analysts then reviewed the benefits that would accrue through the implementation of Project EASI/ED and quantified these where possible. These NPV quantifiable cost savings totaled $1,716,490,966. These benefits are explained in Section 5.

Both savings and accrued benefits were totaled to determine the NPV cost savings criterion score as listed in the criteria evaluation table below in Figure 7-1.

The 22 Project EASI/ED functions were evaluated against the other four criteria based on the requirements that would be implemented within these functions.

Criteria weightings were applied to the scores for the 22 functions to arrive at the weighted scores as listed below in Figure 7-1, where the 22 Project EASI/ED functions are listed in order of their weighted score.

| | | 30% | 12% | 34% | 17% | 7% | |
Functional Requirement	Target Areas and Functions	Information Resource	Customer Service	Student Financial Aid Delivery	Program Management and Integrity	NPV Cost Savings	Weighted Score
1	Interactive Student and Aid Organization Accounts	1.50	0.60	1.02	0.51	0.21	3.84
14	Enrollment Tracking and Reporting	1.50	0.60	1.02	0.51	0.21	3.84
21	Program Data and Performance Information Management	1.50	0.36	1.02	0.51	0.21	3.60
22	Integrated Accounting Management	1.50	0.36	1.02	0.51	0.21	3.60
19	School Eligibility and Data Maintenance	0.90	0.36	1.02	0.85	0.35	3.48
2	Interactive Application Processing and Renewal	0.90	0.60	1.02	0.51	0.35	3.38
17	Repayment Maintenance	0.90	0.60	1.02	0.51	0.35	3.38
20	Guarantor and Lender Information Maintenance	0.90	0.36	1.02	0.85	0.07	3.20
5	Common Aid Origination	0.90	0.36	1.02	0.51	0.35	3.14
9	Disseminate School Disbursement Information	0.90	0.36	1.02	0.51	0.21	3.00
13	Consolidation Processing	0.90	0.36	1.02	0.51	0.21	3.00
18	Defaulted Debt Collection	0.90	0.36	1.02	0.51	0.21	3.00
16	Customer Service Management	0.90	0.60	1.02	0.17	0.21	2.90
8	Invoice and Schedule Disbursement Authorization	0.90	0.36	1.02	0.51	0.07	2.86
12	State Authorization Management	0.90	0.36	1.02	0.51	0.07	2.86
6	Interactive Participant Disbursement Authorization	0.30	0.36	1.02	0.51	0.07	2.26
11	Fund Source Disbursement	0.30	0.36	1.02	0.51	0.07	2.26
3	Pre-Enrollment Financial Aid Simulation Modeling	0.90	0.60	0.34	0.17	0.07	2.08
15	Repayment Option Modeling and Selection/Repayment Counseling	0.90	0.60	0.34	0.17	0.07	2.08
7	Draw Down School Disbursement Authorization	0.30	0.12	1.02	0.17	0.35	1.96
10	Perform Draw Down Reconciliation	0.90	0.12	0.34	0.17	0.21	1.74
4	Multi-Year Promissory Note Processing	0.30	0.12	1.02	0.17	0.07	1.68

Figure 7 - 1, Project EASI/ED Function Weighted Scores

When the weighting of the five criteria is varied, as was done in Section 6, several functions evaluate well in all scenarios. These functions are shown below:

- Enrollment Tracking and Reporting
- Integrated Accounting Management
- Interactive Application Processing and Renewal
- Interactive Student and Aid Organization Accounts
- Program Data and Performance Information Management
- Repayment Maintenance
- School Eligibility and Data Maintenance

The interactive student and aid organization accounts, integrated accounting management, and program data and performance information management functions represent critical infrastructure areas for Project EASI/ED. The interactive student and aid organization accounts provide seamless, integrated access to data. Problems related to data redundancy and inconsistency, as well as problems related to inadequate access to information for postsecondary education community members, are substantially reduced. The integrated accounting management function gives ED a centralized accounting capability, with much more visibility into Department receipts, expenditures, and financial controls. The program data and performance information management function provides all community members, but particularly those with program management responsibilities, information on the performance of community members in meeting their performance goals and complying with program rules. This should not only improve program oversight by ED - it should also allow schools, lenders, and other organizations to benchmark themselves and institute their own improvement initiatives.

The other high-scoring functions represent key activities within Project EASI/ED. Applying for aid, reporting on enrollment status, repaying loans, and maintaining current data on schools are all integral to a successful financial aid delivery process.